FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

"For a world united in prayer"

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Founded by Carl Allison Evans (1880 - 1956)

OUR PURPOSE: To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of Fellowship among mankind.

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EDITORIAL

DEPRESSION AND SPIRITUAL EMPTINESS

OUR ability to pull the wool over our own eyes is astounding. It is one of the more complicated capers of the human mind—to keep us seeing only what we want to see instead of what is.

I have more perhaps than my share of vanities, and one of the vainest of them has always been my belief that I was honest with myself—that at least I did not try to fool myself about myself the way I saw friends and relations constantly doing. I felt that though I had the normal human capacity to delude myself about my hopes and dreams, my ship coming in, and other matters set in the future, I had a superior honesty when it came to the present and the past. . . . Among the things I felt sure of about myself was that I never, absolutely never, suffered from depression.

This, I only recently discovered, is a lie. I can remember my late 'teens, when attacks of depression laid me low as effectively as the most virulent infection and usually for longer periods of recuperation. Now that I remember the truth, I remember the anguish of it, above all, the terrible sense that it was never going to lift. (According to doctors, even the most terrible depressions always end.) It was so painful, so annihilating of what little security and poise I possessed at that age, that I obviously made up my mind never to suffer it again. And I didn't. My mind instantly developed a technique of burying depression so deeply within that I could not perceive its presence inside of me for thirty-some years.

Recently, when by some mysterious change of personality these mind-forged scales began to fall away from my eyes, my depression became visible to me. I could see it like an iceberg showing not even a tip on the surface of consciousness but floating there as ominously as a monster of the deep. I not only see it there, I realize it has always been there, threatening me every

day and night of my life when I supposed I was such a secure if not jaunty man.

What do I do about it? At my age, I understand the futility of analyzing my depression. What caused it long ago or what perpetuates it now makes little or no difference. All I really need to know about it is that I don't want it. I have taught myself to speak of it and its bad effects on me to friends, thus reducing its power over me and also reassuring myself that to a surprising degree this devastation is not uniquely mine. These friends have also given me lessons in turning it over to God. "Let go of it," they say. "Give it up." I do so, with all my heart. . . and it is taken away.

After such crises, emptiness sometimes descends on me like dust from a volcano, burying me in a state of petrifaction in which I believe I will never again be able to partake of the joys and functions of life. This, too, I let go of, I give up. And it is taken away. This is the saving operation of something deeper in me than mind, call it what you will. — P.G.

OLD BELIEF

Anona McConaghy

Welsh farmers, weather conscious, scan
The meadow in the fall,
A rigorous winter settles in
When weeds grow rank and tall.
If snow is deep the grass must reach
Above the drifts to feed
The hungry snowbirds as they watch
For life-sustaining seed.
The signs of nature tell a tale
For those who read them right,
As He who loves all wild things well
Protects them with His might.

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS by Reuben L. Musey

AUTUMN GLORY

EACH season of the year has its own beauty — a picture which has never been seen before, and which may never be seen again.

October. . . autumn glory — the glory of autumn!

Vibrant colors. . . colors that take their cue from the breath-taking beauty of nature.

October is indeed nature's wonder, touched by God's Almighty hand!

It is a time for walking in the country, for scuffing roadside drifts of fallen leaves.

There is crispness in the air in the autumn. The north wind blows chill in the air.

Autumn is the time of heart's desire. God surely — in painting the rainbow colors — smiles on the land everywhere, for there is beauty in every spot as far as the eye can reach.

Autumn! The summer sun has lost its heat, the autumn wind has cooled the earth. The mornings are meeker than they were. The trees hold golden leaves within their fists. Leaves, brilliant yellows, with shades of orange, bordered by red, await the wind to topple them to the ground.

Autumn spreads the canvas, and the brush is in God's hand. There is a little touch of crimson in the sky that once was blue. All the leaves are changing color. The tree-clad mountains are dressed in shining splendor.

Autumn comes to us beautiful from every angle. Autumn excites, challenges, and inspires us all. The days are growing shorter, the October moon shines brighter. It is a wonderful view, wherever you look. It is the work of the Master's touch. All this pageantry of color was planned by the Mastermind above.

Autumn glory — regal autumn! The hills and rolling plains in amber glow.

Nature's cycle is once more finished. It is journey's end. Autumn glory — a season to remember!

Fellowship in Prayer, in the autumn glory pathway in this the silver anniversary year — pauses before coming to the end of the path — while the tinge of autumn remains in the air — to thank the members for their loyal support, patronage, time, and energy in bringing new members in.

The theme "A look backward. . . an aim forward" has served well. Encouraging letters and telephone calls move us to believe "Horizons Unlimited" is in order, since our motto "For a world united in prayer" continues to relate to people everywhere.

Reuben L. Mauger

For all that has been—thanks!
To all that shall be—yes! —Dag Hammarskjold

A PRAYER FOR OCTOBER REVERIE

Dennis Barry Carroll

Heavenly Father, I gaze in reverence at October's splendor. Beneath the bright and blue October sky, Your handiwork has created the rainbow color of this season of the year. I give thankfulness and praise to You, the Master, for the crowning glory of October reverie.

WORSHIP THE LORD IN THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS *(Psalm 29:2)*

Mildred Long

TO WORSHIP is to pour out our hearts in love, adoration, praise to God. It is to kneel, to be humble in spirit, to give ourselves over to an experience in His presence. It is to drink in of His Spirit as life and truth and wisdom, love and peace. It is to unite all our desires, purposes, hopes with His will and His purpose for us. It is to become less aware of self and more aware of God who by His Spirit dwells within my heart.

"In the beauty of holiness." Holiness is beautiful. It means purity, righteousness, perfection. It is beautiful. It is shining brightly as the sun. Sparkling with color and light as the flowing fountain in the sunlight. It is healing and renewing and permanently alive.

If this holiness is within us, then we are alive and pure and whole and wholesome. Wherever sin is, there is darkness and unwholesomeness. The spots of selfishness or self-centeredness are dark blurs before our vision. These hinder our worship.

Only "the pure in heart shall see God." To worship, then, requires purity of heart and motive, purpose and desire. To worship God in the beauty of holiness is to cast out all darkness, allow His light to flood our souls, give ourselves completely and wholeheartedly to His indwelling presence. His presence cleanses us, heals us, renews us, transforms us, lifts us up into a sense of wholeness and oneness with Him. Thus we lose self and become truly a child of God.

This worship may last for a moment, an hour, a day. But, oh Lord, teach us to worship often enough so that we may live in the atmosphere of worship from a pure heart.

Look ahead. You are not required to complete the task; neither are you permitted to lay it down. —The Talmud

NEVER ALONE

Ruth K. Hall

WE WERE driving south on California's busy Highway 99 when it happened. We had expected to reach Bakersfield before dark, but it was late November, and with no interval of twilight such as we have in New Mexico, total darkness had descended with surprising suddenness, broken only by the sweep of headlights of cars rushing over the freeway from both north and south.

Suddenly the motor gave a warning sputter, and the car began to lose power. Then, with a final cough, the motor died, and my husband was barely able to pull off onto the narrow, emergency shoulder before we came to a complete stop.

"What happened?" I was puzzled. This car had been probably the most dependable one we ever owned.

"We're out of gas!" Dick said. "Of all the stupid things—I completely forgot to check the gauge before we left Livermore."

Out of gas! Such a thing hadn't happened to us since we were teenagers. But this had not been an ordinary day; events had transpired that could upset the plans of two middle-aged tourists like us, who always checked gas and oil and tires before starting out, and who made it an iron clad rule never to drive after dark. Our days of hurried trips were past; now when we traveled it was at leisure and for enjoyment.

This trip was an example. We had made a pleasant tour of northern California, culminating in a mid-day Thanksgiving dinner at our daughter's home in Livermore, some fifty miles east of San Francisco.

Our Jeanette is an excellent cook, and we had loitered over dessert and coffee as we discussed our plans for leaving next morning to start the two-day trip back to New Mexico. When the telephone rang, our son-in-law Ted took the call in the den, returning a few minutes later pale and shaken. His mother had suffered a stroke and passed away in Los Angeles. His aging father needed him at once.

Stunned and grieved, we made hasty plans. Ted and Jeanette found that they could get a flight out within an hour. We would take them to the airport, and since it was only mid-afternoon we would start our drive homeward and spend the night in a motel en route. After anxious moments of hurried packing and sad adieus, we were on our way. It was only a few miles from Livermore to Highway 99, the great freeway that carried heavy traffic twenty-four hours a day between Sacramento and Los Angeles.

There was no fifty-five m.p.h. speed-limit at that time, and in less than two hours we reached Fresno, where we had planned to stop for the night. A long evening in a lonely motel seemed most unappealing. "Can't we drive on a while?" I said. "We still have an hour or two of daylight, don't we?"

"Barely." Dick looked at his watch. We couldn't see the sun because of the heavy overcast. "We should get to Bakersfield in a couple of hours, though, and we can get a good motel there." So we stayed on the freeway and drove on.

Now we sat helplessly in the car, wondering what to do. We knew the state highway patrol traveled the freeways, but we realized we hadn't seen a patrol car all afternoon. "It's the holiday," Dick said. "They must be taking it easy today."

We raised the hood, as we had heard one should do if in need of assistance, and waited. It seemed I had never experienced such total darkness as that which enveloped the country on either side of us. There was no sign of a light from any house or place of business, only the flash of headlights as cars raced by in a constant stream.

"No one will stop," I said dismally. "You know we wouldn't stop. It's too dangerous."

"There's a house or building of some kind over to our right," Dick said. "See? There are lights. There may be a watchman. I'll walk over and investigate."

Locking the doors of the car, I huddled down to wait in misery. Cars continued to swoosh by in an unbroken stream. Some distance away, across the median, traffic from the south followed the same rushing pace. . . . It was pitch-dark out there

where Dick was stumbling over rough ground. What if he should fall and be injured?

How stupid of us to allow this to happen! Since we never drove at night, we had no flares, not even a flashlight. And parked as we were on the narrow strip of paving, how easily we could be sideswiped!

Then I became aware of a car slowly pulling to a stop on the shoulder ahead. A stocky bearded black man got out and approached my window. Cold, unreasoning terror gripped me as recent newspaper stories flashed through my mind, sordid tales of drug traffic and unsolved murders in the Bay area. And—most frightening of all—an account of a group of militant blacks who had openly declared war on "whitey."

"Need help?" the man said from close to the window. Cautiously I opened it an inch. "We're out of gas," I said. "My husband has gone for help. He will be here any minute."

"Went over there, did he?" He gestured to the right. "That's a seed plant. Nobody there at night."

Just then I made out the figure of my husband climbing out of the ditch beyond the highway bar pit. Now I dared to open the window a little more.

"Nobody there," Dick said when he reached the car. "Just a couple of fierce dogs and a well-lighted yard."

"This man was kind enough to stop," I quavered. "Maybe he can send help from the next town."

"I'd be happy to oblige, ma'm," he said. "But you know it's a holiday, and not many stations are open. And if they are, they're not making trips out to deliver gas, that's for sure. I'll just take you into Bakersfield, and we'll try to find some gas and bring it back."

"It must be fifteen miles or more," Dick said. "Would you take the time?"

"I can spare the time to help you out," the man said. "Come on, but you'd best leave the lady here, my car is pretty small."

I watched as they drove away. Unwelcome thoughts crowded my mind. Dick could be robbed and murdered! I didn't know the

name of the man who was taking him to town. I didn't get either his license number or the make of his car. As the cars rushed by on the highway, I felt as isolated as if I were on an island. Suppose someone else stopped, someone who would like to steal our car? I was helpless.

"Dear Lord," I said aloud, "take care of us. Bring him back safely!"

Then a different mood possessed me. Words of hymns I had heard as a child came to mind. My mother loved to sing, and how often I had heard her singing as she went about her household tasks: "Be not dismayed, whate'er betide, God will take care of you." And another of her favorites: "No, never alone, I know I'm never alone."

I felt very foolish, cowering here in the darkness. Where was my faith, the faith I had considered a part of my life for as long as I could remember? In this moment of revelation I knew that nothing that could happen to me would be any more degrading than these senseless fears that made me feel physically ill. A feeling of peace replaced the panic, and I waited calmly.

They came back at last with a five-gallon can of gasoline, and in a few minutes our motor was humming again.

"We had trouble finding a station open," Dick said, "but our good Samaritan here managed it."

He tried to pay him. "Something for your time and trouble, at least!"

"No, thank you just the same, man" was the reply. "You filled my tank in town, that's enough. As for time, I've got plenty of that—just have to be in LA to join my band on Saturday night."

We thanked him again, but were silenced by his parting words: "Like I told you, man, when we were driving back, it really makes me happy when I can do something to help a brother. That is my reward, see."

Yes, we saw—and with renewed vision—that man is inherently good, and that fear has no place in the heart when faith and love are allowed to prevail.

*

THE FIELD

Eleanor Ebersole

IT'S mine," said the dandelion.

"Well, I don't know," said the buttercup.

"We shall see," said the daisy already dancing in the sun.

The bluet at the far end wondered, too.

"What is your claim?" the paintbrush who was just beginning to get organized inquired of the dandelion.

"I have already laid my seed," the dandelion said. "You can see that my flowers are brightening much of the field."

"Not here yet, anyway," said the bluet indignantly. All the other little bluets shook their heads.

Finally the resting columbine said, "Never mind. We'll take turns."

"Well, I never!" gasped the dandelion. "That's all right for you and bluet and some of the others, but not for me. I shine most brightly in the spring, but I can be found most anytime, as you may remember."

"Now, now," spoke the black-eyed susan whose turn on that basis would not come until much later. "Turns are one thing, but dandelion is right. If one so desires, one should be allowed to blossom continually."

On and on the flowers went discussing, not knowing quite what. The bluet rested, the daisies left their seeds along their dancing paths, and the grasses had their day to flower.

Night and day, chattering went on. Deciding became the event of the summer.

The brook and the rain, the bees and the sun all listened to the flowers, and saw the mixing of their seed until each flower was satisfied. Somehow there was just enough room. The field, abundantly blessed, could not be a field without them all.

Those who want happiness must stoop to find it—it is a flower that grows in every vale. —*William Blake*

GROVE

Ramon Alan Arroyo

Where are the angels,
why aren't there angels,
it feels like Heaven here!

Pines pinning the sky
into a new design.
Sumacs suddenly ablazed,
reminding me of the burning bush.
Why isn't Moses here,
why aren't the animals plowing,
the nearby farms kneeling?

I feel alive,
reborn of a feeling.
This was where prayer was proven.
Here by the grove,
where colors myriad the designs of God.
Reds and browns are slippery foxes
darting between the azure shadows.

Come, friends. Come, world!
Angels must come here,
it feels so holy here, so sacred.

IN OUR GREEN BUBBLE

Alice Mackenzie Swaim

Stars, planets, galaxies
are a spattering of bright, silent bubbles
across infinity;

how can we, in our green bubble,
see their meaning undistorted
or give their glory names?
Bubbles break easily and comets flash
like unpredicted winds; meteors fall
while we catalogue our whims,
follow our fancies in the firmament
from our own shimmering mirage
on the vast floor of time.

Four things come not back: the spoken word, the sped arrow, time past, the neglected opportunity.

HEAVY PRAYERS

Mary Graham Lund

HOW MANY prayers drag down the soul and keep it wallowing in dirt, hands over eyes, and tongues too fat to shout! Prayers should rise and float and lift the soul to heights where it can watch for the miracle.

What miracle? Whatever you're praying for. Love, freedom, equality, peace. Stand up and shout! You can't go whispering your prayers, slinking through crowds, avoiding eyes, and hope to get to heaven unannounced.

The miracle is you—man, woman, child, created and creating, forever and ever, Amen.

CAPITALIZE ON YOUR INTUITION

F. Bernadette Turner

"Man's highest attainment comes through inner revelation"

INTUITION is revelation. God is trying to tell us something. Intuition, Divine Guidance, Holy Spirit, still small voice, —by whatever name is God revealing His plan through us. We can either listen to or disregard these inner promptings. The choice is ours to make. The extent to which we act upon these directives determines our experience pattern, Let us capitalize on our intuition and make life what we want it to be.

Intuition is defined as "knowledge obtained, the power of knowing without recourse to inference or reasoning." Man's most costly mistake is reasoning away his intuitive feelings. He allows intellect to supersede Divine Intelligence. The day we accept God as our way-shower is the day of our dominion. This means holding fast (faith) to what we know within ourselves to be right, however convincingly external factors belie the directive. If we live intuitively, we let God have His way. We see the folly of relying upon our meager understanding when God's wisdom is available to us. We realize that decision-making is not our responsibility.

There are four basic steps in the intutitive process, namely: 1) to identify with the Allness of life, 2) to develop receptivity, 3) to act upon our inner-knowing, and 4) to express gratitude.

Identifying with the Allness of Life changes our thinking. We see beyond our petty selves. We know that what is good for us must be compatible with the good of mankind. The well-known quotation, "I am a part of all that I have met," takes on new meaning. As we become less self-centered and more Universal minded, boundaries cease to be. This broadening of our perspective may be likened to viewing the Grand Canyon. Its depth, grandeur, vastness, —its very awesomeness, uplifts our conscious-

ness until we merge with the Totality of Creation. The Invisible and the Visible become One. We touch Reality. We comprehend God no less as personal but more objectively as impersonal,—Principle and Universal Law. We understand, perhaps for the first time, that Divine Order is perpetuated in our lives only insofaras we capitalize on our Intuition. Harmonious living is synonomous with Divine Order. To live harmoniously we must operate within the Total System.

Developing receptivity to the Will of God requires patience and self-abdication. We must wait on the Lord and let God govern our lives. This may threaten our personal egos, but we can successfully reach our goal if it is our sincere desire. We cannot harbor resentments and negative feelings and be an open channel to the Will of God at the same time. In prayer, we must move beyond mundane affairs. We must take ourselves and not our troubles to our Lord. In this attitude of givingness, we are sensitive to our inner promptings. Forcing ourselves to be receptive defeats our purpose. Determination (self-will) sets up resistance which is contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ. Whether we are intuitively guided during prayer is not important. If we feel at peace within ourselves following meditation, our prayer has been answered. Divine guidance comes in sundry ways—during prayer, while riding on a bus or plane, overhearing another's conversation, from the printed page, in a dream—ad infinitum. If we develop a Christ-consciousness, we will get the message.

Acting upon our inner-knowing depends upon our faith. At this point, the intuitive process frequently breaks down. We may know what action to take but because of wavering faith we are afraid to step out with God. Self-will takes over and we suffer the consequences. We control our destiny. We can help ourselves to capitalize on our intuition if we affirm daily: "God is leading me, guiding me, protecting me. God knows best. I will follow." Why gamble with our own happiness when God's wisdom is only a 'listen' away?

Expressing gratitude seems to have gone out of style. Not

only do we take God's blessings for granted but we accept gifts of love from our fellowmen and often forget to show appreciation. A "thank you, Father" goes a long way with God. The many references to thanks and praise in the Scriptures is evidence of the importance of expressing gratitude. Gratitude is love in response to love. Let us keep love in circulation.

To illustrate the working-out of the four steps in the intuitive process, this true story will be cited. Frances loves pets. On her morning walks, feeling a Oneness with all Creation, and emptying her consciousness of problems, she prayed, "Father, if it be Thy Will, send me a little pet to love. . . a tiny, homeless creature, and I will care for it even if crippled or injured." Under such humanitarian circumstances, she thought the manager of the no-pet hotel where she lived would not object. About three weeks after Frances had begun her morning ritual, she was returning from her walk when a Voice from within spoke to her: "Go to the next corner, cross the street, and come back on the other side." She was receptive. "OK," she answered. Anyone passing by would have heard it. On the other side of the street were eight people looking in the same direction. They were watching a helpless, frightened baby bird beating its wings against the windowpane of a bank building. It appeared to be injured. People wondered how it happened to be there since there were no trees or birds in that area. Frances knew. It was answered prayer. Everyone seemed relieved when she picked up the exhausted little creature and took it home with her. It nestled in the palm of her hand without resistance. Perhaps that tiny bird's prayer was answered, too.

The bird was weak but not injured. Frances fed it with an eyedropper for several days. It adapted quickly to its new surroundings. The love of this little sparrow for Frances defies description. It is her constant companion. It travels by train, plane, bus or boat and chirps happily all the way. Frances thanks God every day for her heaven-sent pet. Incidentally the manager of the hotel welcomed his new resident graciously. . . . "One who is properly attuned becomes, through the super-conscious mind, a recipient of knowledge that is above human, and wisdom that

is divine. He knows by direct-knowing" (Henry E. Hamblin).

Capitalize on your intuition and make life what you want it to be.

WHAT IS A MOUNTAIN

Kathleen Gillette

WHAT is a mountain? An eruption of wonder, God's manner of expressing His perpetual presence. His hands may have created a mountain to prove His omniscience. A minute formation compared to Him and His words although a giant spectacle compared to man. A mountain may take thousands of years to be born; a man nine months.

What is rain falling upon the mountain? A kiss as brilliant as a star, a kiss from heaven which moisturizes and supports life. Drops of power forming underground splendors; drops of delicacy falling with freshness.

What is a tree growing on the mountain? A tall gentleman waving jovial arms and fingers. A protective one guarding plants and offering shelter to his friends, the birds. A glorious structure happy to be living; happy to be a participant in the cycles of growing and dying.

What is the rock resting on the mountain? A hard object containing fury ready to fall at a given moment. Its jagged surface proclaiming its right to be a member of the environment.

What is the sun shining on the mountain? A faraway planet bursting with light and heat. A rider who rides much too fast across the sky.

These beauties are God's way of proving His promise, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

The mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing — Isaiah 53:12

OCTOBER HILLS

Ada Hall Pond

October hills, pale amethyst
Against the soft blue sky
The ever and enduring hills
Sing praise to God on high

October hills of skirted gold,
Bright flame and rust each tree,
Eternal God, the singing hills
Pay homage unto Thee

GRECIAN PREMONITION

Rose Noller

Was it a dream,
Apollo's Oracle at Delphi?
Or do I seem
an Oracle of today
where I foresee
our history?

Do I remember
the blue, blue Grecian waters
as I dismember
my mind
to what I find today,
in our Plan?

What is there in man

that he can sight
from out the light
the whole scheme of things?
the "victory" with wings,
and the Acropolis?
This, I believe,
as I interweave the present
and my past,
we shall always last,
you and me
into infinity!

FULL CIRCLE

Ruth Kennedy Hall

If with my words I may impart
a happy thought to lift the heart,
creating ties of love that bind,
or pictures lovely to the mind,
then each in turn will seek its kind;
as raindrops hasten to the sea,
so will my good come back to me.

If simple word or deed one day
may help my brother find his way,
his honest labors to commend,
to let him know at journey's end
that one he met would call him friend,
as raindrops hasten to the sea,
so will my good come back to me.

"I fled Him down the nights and
down the days . . ." — Thompson

IN HEADLONG FLIGHT

Emma S. McLaughlin

O Heaven's Hound, You follow close today;
men sense Your presence, tremble as they run
along the shadowed labyrinthine way
in search of highways You would have them shun.
Concealing telltale evidence of tears,
a raucous laughter seeks to still the pain
of labored breathing. Down the arch of years
they flee Your love as though it were a bane.

Afraid to have You loose and running free,
they cage You safe in templed wood and stone;
released from Your majestic instancy
the godless can ignore the word atone.
What clouds the human heart? What do men hide
who fear to have You running at their side?

HOUSES

Leta M. Edwards

Pity the house that has no friends
To ornament its door;
The house that has no shaft of sun
Playing across its floor.
Pity a mansion's hauteured pose
Upon well-gardened space,
But look with joy on cottages
That wear a smiling face.

PICNIC ON A HILLSIDE

Nixeon Civille Handy

We need one to observe.
Andrew saw the boy with the loaves
and fish. He was ready
with facts in hand to help
to serve the multitude.
Another worked the miracle.

How did Andrew get the loaves and fish
away from the boy?
It was his lunch, mother-packed
in loving concern.
What did Andrew say?

Did the boy get up and offer help?
Give out his picnic lunch?
What did he think when he saw
the band of trust from boy to man
binding without being bound,
between the loaves and miracle
what shining thread stretched
to make it happen?

QUESTION

Jean Moore Smith

Can one receive one's heart's desire
And leanness in one's very soul?
If this is what I have achieved,
Have mercy, Father. Make me whole
Though this may mean something must give.

THE GREATEST OF GRANDMOTHERS

Velta Myrle Allen

ONE of my grandmothers, many "greats" removed, is the most unforgettable character that ever influenced me. Without her, my life might never have happened, for she is responsible for giving me and others much happiness, though her own was very limited.

As a direct descendant, I have tried to gain a complete history of her life, and her influence on succeeding generations, but there is little written record, especially before she met the man in her life.

I have searched family-trees without finding a scrap of information. So what her early days were like, I do not know—except that the huge estate where she lived from the day she was born until her death was the only world she knew.

Through many generations, the family was scattered to the four winds, so the tree is broken in some places and names have been lost. Occasionally I mention her name to someone and learn a bit that I never heard before. Of course these are relations far removed, and only the available records convince me that there is any relationship whatsoever.

This large estate where she lived has been written about in several accounts, though vague and smattering. On my library shelf there is one book I treasure more than any other because of the descriptions it contains of her estate. The semi-tropical climate needed little tending of the fields. Lush and verdant hills and rolling plains as far as the eye could see, with spotted patches of fruit trees here and there, made it a paradise within itself. Fruits from the trees and vegetables fresh from the soil were used in that climate conducive to all-year-round harvest.

Since Grandmother was not confined to household chores or labor in the field, she was free to cultivate the cultural advantages of her day. There is no doubt in my mind that she knew

the best way to preserve fruit delicacies and mix the best juices. Whether she baked bread or not is wild conjecture. I prefer to believe she didn't, for I like to dream about her being a great lady.

She finally grew up and met *the* man—her one and only. Their great devotion and loyalty to each other are legends. They have become a code of ethics—the same ones, I have no doubt, that have followed me to Nebraska, Washington, California, and New York and all the other places I have lived.

When Grandmother met her beloved for the first time the stars nearly burst from the heavens. At least it seemed that way to her as she looked over his shoulder that evening when time stood still and her heart thumped so loudly. No words were necessary, for they both *knew*, and the account is the sweetest love-story I have ever read. It makes me proud that it is in the book on my shelf.

Their life together went smoothly for many years, during which their sons became young men. Then tragedy struck deep through the death of one of the sons, grieving them beyond description. They never again felt the security and peace of years gone by. They could not adjust themselves, and it clouded this beautiful love-story which has intrigued and influenced all my life. I read it with concern, wondering if they would have "lived happily ever after" if there had been no tragedy.

This remarkable ancestor of mine is a great influence on anyone who reads her story. . . . Her name, of course, was Eve.

AN ADOPTED SON

Virginia Arnold

ONE of our neighbors used to tell how he was adopted. No one told him he was until second grade, when a classmate said: "My

folks say you're adopted!'' He went home in tears and begged his mother to tell him it wasn't so. She said, ''Yes, you are adopted. But you go back to school and tell that friend of yours that we *chose* you because we wanted you, while his parents had to take whatever they got!'' And so it is with man — God chooses him. God wants to adopt him as His own. . . .

SHALL WE LIVE AGAIN?

VICTOR HUGO'S great soul found utterance in his later years for these thoughts, which will find an echo in many hearts:

''I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest once cut down; the new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds.

''You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets, and the roses, as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous yet simple. It is a fairy-tale, and it is history.

''For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and in verse: history, philosophy, drama, romance, satire, ode, and song; I have tried it all. But I feel I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave, I can say like many others—'I have finished my day's work.' But I cannot say, 'I have finished my life.' My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight, it opens on the dawn.''

(Contributed by Martha Fowler Reichle)

ON HIS BLINDNESS
(John Milton's Letter To a Foreign Friend)

THEY charge me with poverty, because I never desired to become rich dishonestly; they accuse me of blindness, they tax me with cowardice, and while I had the use of my eyes and my sword I never feared the boldest among them; finally, I am upbraided with deformity, while no one was more handsome in the age of beauty. I do not even complain of my want of sight; in the night with which I am surrounded the light of the Divine presence shines with a more brilliant lustre. God looks down upon me with tenderness and compassion because I can now see none but Himself, Misfortune should protect me from insult, and render me sacred; not because I am deprived of the light of heaven, but because I am under the shadow of the Divine wings which have enveloped me with this darkness.

(Contributed by Martha Fowler Reichle)

THE ART OF LOVING

Catherine Cabeen Houck

TODAY, probably more than at any other time in history, there is a need not only for understanding people of all nations but for loving them. When Christ's followers were reminded of the Commandments, they responded as we would likely do today —with an affirmative nod and an air implying that of course we observe them. But when He pointed out that even publicans did as much, He pricked their self-esteem. We face the same accusation today. For to love one's family, friends, and kind is not enough. Even modern "publicans" do as much.

As Christians, knowing the need for love in our lives, we must face the disturbing factors of today's mission. To remember

those in prison can only be done in most places through prayer, intercession, and occasional personal contact. Remembering those who are suffering is in the range of most of us. We are daily faced with requests and opportunities to alleviate pain, hunger, and misery, to which we respond in good measure. This is one area where it is within the ability of most of us to help, even in a small way.

But that brings us back to the fact that not many of us love sufficiently to meet Christ's commandment. We need to ask our God of love, of justice, and of mercy, to strengthen us in our love for all peoples, including those we do not understand, as well as those who are uninteresting, unfriendly, and unlovable. When we have done this, we will know that

To love is as natural
as for a bud to open, water to run.
If it comes hard, try one.
To love is as natural
as for a cricket to chirp, a bee to hum.
If you love, try some.
To love is as natural
as for a bird to sing, a leaf to fall.
You love one, then some, then all.

THE FIVE WONDERS OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

Albert Jacobsen

DURING my lifetime I have occasionally read of what are called "The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World," also "The Seven Wonders of the Modern World," "The Seven Natural Wonders of the World," "The Eighth Wonder of the World," etc. In my estimation, there also exist what I would call "The Five Wonders of the Christian World."

The first wonder of the Christian world, and the very founda-

tion of Christianity, is the New Testament — the story of Jesus Christ, from the date of His birth to His miraculous resurrection; also, the story of His disciples, up to and including Revelation.

The second wonder is The Holy Bible in its entirety (also called "The Holy Scriptures") accepted by Christians as inspired by God and of divine authority, the New Testament being wholly of the Christian church, and the basis of it.

The third wonder is the vast collection of lovely, inspiring hymns, religious songs, oratorios, etc., which have been composed during the last several hundred years.

The fourth wonder is the superlative art—the famous paintings and frescoes by the great masters of the past, as well as the woodcarvings, the engravings, the sculpture, and the hand-written, illuminated books.

The fifth wonder comprises the religious edifices, from the most modest but often beautiful chapels and churches of wood or brick or stone, to the magnificent cathedrals, many in the ornate Gothic style but many also in the classic style of the Renaissance.

"I WROTE A LETTER TO GOD"

Mildred White

DEAR GOD:

Great and Holy Creator of this vast Universe and all life, I am writing this letter to you, to thank you for the many blessings that are mine to enjoy here on this earth.

The sunrise of a spring morning, painting the eastern sky with a soft rosy glow, warmly touching the dew-kissed earth, awakening the sleeping birds to go about their activities for the day. First the sleepy chirp of a robin, then another, and another, until the air is filled with a crescendo of birdsong.

I have wandered through the leafy haunts of a wooded area and picked the first wildflowers of spring that grew beside a little stream freshly washed by a warm rain. I did not tread on them, or wantonly pull them up by their roots, but left some for others

to enjoy as I knew you would want me to do.

My eyes lovingly embrace our green and fertile valleys with the beautiful Susquehanna River winding peacefully through them. "I Lift Up Mine Eyes Unto the Hills." North, south, east, and west the hills surround our valleys, crowned with deciduous and coniferous trees, a living green in springtime and brilliant with chaotic colors in the fall. Friends may come and go, but our hills remain, tall and majestic. As I gaze upon them in awe, my faith in you, God, is reaffirmed.

I have walked deep into a pine forest, breathed the pungent scent of pine, listened to the murmuring and sighing as a gentle breeze stirred their branches. I have leaned against their rugged trunks and received renewed strength and courage to go on living when I have been overwhelmed with grief and my burdens seemed greater than I could bear.

I have watched a wood-thrush drop dainty morsels of food into the wide-open mouths of her naked young, and tend them with gentle care. I have listened to the ethereal song of a hermit thrush hauntingly sweet and beautiful from a deep moist woodland. I have watched a northern water-thrush teeter precariously over the stones of a small stream.

I have held a chipmunk in my hand and thrilled to the touch of his cold little feet as he took my offering of peanuts, stuffing his cheeks full, before scampering away to hide them for the winter.

I have camped beside a northern lake and watched an osprey dive for fish, a masterpiece of timing, then fly away to feed on his catch. I have watched the beauty of a sunset glowing and shimmering over quiet water. As the sun sank, trees became mysterious shadows casting weird reflections on the water. The call of a loon is eerily answered by another across the lake. A whippoorwill breaks the stillness with his call far into the night. I have sat in a boat at night on the lake, the full moon tracing a silvery path across the deep water, and watched the strange phenomenon of the northern lights dancing across the sky like memories of lightning. . . . I am thankful, God, for all these wonders of nature that I enjoy so much.

DOUBT AND FAITH (An Argonelle)

Sylvia Argow

Why doubt?
An unbelieving heart
Could know no secret of His sway
And find no time to ever pray
An unbelieving heart.

Why faith?
A challenge summons me
To take a look at life undone
And pray until the battle's won
A challenge summons me.

I THANK GOD FOR EVERYTHING

Anna Roubik

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve;
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do greater things;
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.
I asked for riches, that I might be happy;
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men;
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life;
I was given life that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for —
But everything that I hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered;
I am, among all men, most richly blessed of all!

"I'VE LOST MY POWER!"

Irma Dovey

ONE winter day I pulled out of parking and started down a long gentle incline, uncertain whether the motor was running or not. The car had been balky about starting. It coasted on the slight hill, so I still could not tell for sure about the motor. I turned to the right, and then I knew, for the steering-wheel was stiff under my hands.

"I've lost my power-steering!" I said to myself, then braked and started the engine.

I had visited a friend who was very ill in the hospital, so perhaps that was why I saw an analogy.

"It's like losing touch with God," I thought. "My power needn't be lost, really, not ever."

I headed the car into the busy street and drove home.

"My power," I kept thinking. "How many times I have lost power, have lost touch with God, when I needn't have done so! How many times I have slipped into 'manual sterring,' or tried to run my own life. I have tried for help from earthly sources, or depended on my own strength, when all the time God's power was waiting!"

I wondered if this chance thought would stay with me. Or was it chance? The message had come when I needed it. I could pray about my sick friend without fear. I could face the duties of the next difficult week with more assurance. My own health problems seemed less as I prayed: "Don't let me lose my power again! Help me to remember to 'plug in,' to know that power is always available!"

All aspects of life are holy; let us take care not to draw any sharp lines between secular and spiritual life.

FINDING PEACE

Virginia Ladd Otis

MANY of us long for peace of mind and a sense of real security in a world which, in our worst moments, impresses us as going mad. Fear and insecurity gnaw at our hearts. Since our eyes are not fixed beyond the stars, the truth has escaped us. We forget that we have been loaned to earth, that we are sparks struck off the everlasting flame, to glow here for a time and then return.

Those who have diligently sought to know the mystery of self and its relationship to God realize that the human soul shelters a celestial flame which never becomes extinguished. There are scoffers, of course, those who have never by-passed the material realm of sense-perception and personality which lie at the surface of one's being. Never taking the plunge, never passing the boundaries of the reasoning level of consciousness, they have not been in touch with pure creation. Never casting their deeper consciousness adrift on a larger sea, they have failed to catch a glimpse of the eternal truth. He who has faith in the five senses alone sees no angelic realms of light, hears no celestial music. When religious faith is dead, the world is indeed a fearsome place, for one cannot see beyond its inconsistencies and evil; and death is a final reality.

How does one's vision rise beyond the concept of material or fleshly things which are obviously temporary? One must learn to meditate, to discover with the mind those regions beyond the temporal world where the eternal things reside. In concentrated stillness, searching first within ourselves and then beyond to limitless space, relating what is within to what is beyond, we find a nothingness. Yet out of nothingness gradually comes a feeling growing into a knowing, a realization. Naked truth is abstract and can only be realized through intuition.

Once we have attained pure consciousness with a complete forgetting of self, we sense the truth eternal encompassing beauty, goodness, and love, all held in the creative power of God. This

realm revealed by intuition becomes expressed in light which is felt, or may be made visible to the inner eye...hence the term "enlightenment," or the ability "to see the light." Having by-passed our own personality, we gain the insight that all people are essentially the same, are more closely related than we realized heretofore. In fact, we sense a bonded unity among all living things. Going a step further than "seeing the light," we can "walk in the light" and by our faith help light the way for others.

We find that there is no need for any of us to walk in darkness, or to have to "whistle in the dark." Certainly courage is great, but faith is stronger...not a blind faith, but an unshakeable faith based on the truth we have learned for ourselves. While doing what we can here on this uncertain earth, let us keep our eyes fixed beyond the stars, the realm of the unchangeable. Above all, let us realize that we are, and forever will be, subject to eternal laws.

Only by unreservedly surrendering our souls to the will of the eternal wellspring, God, can we have peace of mind.

PRAY

Hattie Pope

We should pray every morning
when the sun shines bright,
And also pray each evening
in the soft twilight.

It's just our Heavenly Father
who hears when we pray,
And only He can answer
in His own kind way.

SLENDER SPEAR OF BARLEY

Erica May Brooks

The breeze blows
long-bearded barley
with shirr . . . with shirr.

The raucous starlings
beat their wings over it
with whirr . . . whirr.
Chattering as they
congregate selfishly,
over stalks and granules
of grain.

*

The aging farmer
plucks a slender spear
Scanning the etched threads
of wire-like strands.
Mere skeleton of nutriment,
it quivers in his hands
like echoes of some
faraway instrument.

*

And yet, he caresses it
most fondly, for he knows
he must tend and till
his ground if nourishment
is to be found.

SITUATIONAL ETHICS AND SHIFTING SANDS

A Modern Parable

Mary Feese

THERE was a certain man who had great plans for his life. He did not make impulsive decisions, but pondered long upon the truths that were brought to his attention. He was known as a hard and honorable worker, and in his private life—besides reverent church-attendance—he watched the lives of those whom he wished to copy, read the thoughtfully-presented opinions of others, and watched the television programs with consciousness of the ultimate meaning of it all.

The time came for him to build his house. Since it was his habit to make wise decisions, he searched long until he found just the spot he was looking for. And there was a section of the city called Fortress Rock and the homes there were built sound and strong and beautiful. This wise man purchased property there, and the foundation of his house was squarely set upon the rock.

And when the storms of life came, as they do to the just and to the unjust, and the floods of hatred and prejudice and pure misunderstanding started to rise, and the winds of despair blew chill and prolonged, then the storms beat upon his house, but it did not fall. For, as you remember, it was founded upon the Rock.

Later, when the Storm of Life was over, this wise man looked forward to the promise of another and heavenly home, which promise you may claim, too.

BUT that man had a brother who also had great plans for his life. This, however, was an impatient man, and rather impulsive. He felt that time spent in thinking or in quiet occupations was wasted, and spent much time in pursuit of the pleasures of the moment. He sometimes went to church, and did enough work at his job so that he did not lose his position. He really wasn't a bad fellow at all,

you realize, but he was young and wanted to enjoy himself. While others were analyzing the reasons behind situational ethics, he was far too busy to analyze anything, and guided his course through the shifting sands of expediency. Nothing deliberate, of course, but snap decisions are usually expedient.

When the time came for this man to build his house, his friends were building in a subdivision called Silver Sands. Since it looked like a pleasant place to live, during the summer he bought property there, and began to build. The season was short, and construction was rushed and—to tell the truth—materials were not of the best quality. The sandy soil made it difficult to construct a good foundation, but it was built as best the circumstances allowed, and the work pressed on before winter.

Later, when the Storms of Life came, and the floods gathered from the results of his carelessness and incompetence, and his having passed lightly over those duties that should have been well and thoroughly done—the storms beat upon this man's house, his home of Situational Ethics founded upon those shifting sands, and it collapsed utterly. When the winds of despair had passed by, it was found by his former friends that this man had taken his own life. And, alas, he had no hope of a home beyond.

Then the wise man mourned, for he had loved his brother, and would have welcomed him into Fortress Rock to build a house next door to his own. And he seemed to hear an echo, a voice out of the past, but the words are as true now as they were then. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still. . . ."

THIS, then, is the parable telling of the houses built by the wise man and the foolish man. The haunting question remains: "And your house?"

A man wrapped up in himself makes a small package.

WELCOME FELICITATIONS. We are grateful to *SUNSHINE* Magazine for publishing in its August issue the article entitled "A Silver Anniversary for Fellowship in Prayer." It came as a welcome and highly-prized sign of recognition from our sister publication, whose founder Henry F. Henrichs was in touch with our Carl Allison Evans as early as 1949.

Other public attention came to the Fellowship this summer as a result of Reuben Musey's election to the presidency. Lengthy stories with photographs were printed in the Hagerstown (Md.) *Morning Herald, Messenger,* and *Daily Mail,* the *News* of Frederick, Md., the *News* of Hancock, Md., and the *Times* of Gettysburg, Penna. It's gratifying to the ego, but the real importance of this kind of publicity lies in its ability to make the Fellowship known to more and more people.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS. President Reuben Musey and new Contributing Editor Dennis Barry Carroll will be speaking about the Fellowship in their Pennsylvania-Maryland part of the country, come fall. Executive Secretary Kathryn G. Brown and Editor-Vice President Paul Griffith will be keeping similar engagements.

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THERE COMES A TIME. . . .

We regret to announce that, with inflationary costs and higher postage rates (and prospects of further increases), the Fellowship can no longer send free copies of *FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER.*

If your subscription has expired, we sincerely hope you will want to renew it. Otherwise, we will be compelled to stop sending you further copies.

As yet, we have not increased our subscription rates, which do not cover present costs.

We are sorry that the time has come when—of necessity—we must follow this procedure.

MY PRAYER

Katherine B. March

May I not be so small
as to belittle
any race, creed, or color;
or, in doing so
I would only make
myself smaller.